dated 1413, is preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris.

It is significant that the anti-Jewish persecutions marked the end of the glories of the Majorcan school of cartography. The little group of *converses* continued the Jewish tradition for another generation; thereafter, there was a phenomenally rapid decadence. A single point illustrates this in a highly impressive fashion. The Jewish map-makers with their wide-spread connexions had known and indicated all that was possible about the cities, the trade-routes, and the oases of the Sahara. Their successors forgot it all. Pedro Roselli, in his planis-phere of 1465, seventy-five years after the outbreak of persecution, marked only four localities to the south of the Atlas range; his successors knew only one.[1]

§in

With regard to the antecedents of Christopher Columbus, a certain degree of mystery, largely of his own making, still prevails. This is chiefly due, apparently, to the fact that, in his anxiety to claim a noble origin, he spoke as little and as confusedly as possible about his parentage. There are certain obvious' discrepancies, moreover, between his own account of his career and

*It was not only by their provision of maps that the Jewish scientists of Majorca contributed to geographical discovery. They also excelled as manufacturers of nautical instruments. Two were especially famous. The physician Isaac Nafuci was a favourite of Pedro IV of Aragon, who called him "the celebrated Jew of Majorca" and never tired of singing his praises. In 1359, the King chose him

"to make the clocks and quadrants that we desire'[1], and in 1365, at a critical moment of the war with Castile, he ordered payment to be made to him for a silver quadrant which he had provided. Nafuci worked in conjunction with the Majorcan Jewish scientist Ephraim Bellshom (to whom, incidentally, a contemporary Rabbi turned to discover the area of a globe, in connexion with the construction of a ritual bath). The two collaborated in the manufacture of an astrolabe for the use of the Infant Juan, together with a translation into Catalan of an astronomical work of the famous al-Farghani.